CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for protecting, tracking, and retrieving data on a computer system, said method comprising the steps of:

(a)   connecting a database to an existing operating system and to existing file management software on said computer system;

(b)   selecting at least one file to be protected from a primary storage device in said computer system;

(c)   copying said at least one file from said primary storage device to a secondary storage device in said computer system by activating said existing file management software to perform said copying, wherein said removable storage device contains at least one removable storage medium wherein said at least one removable storage medium has a unique identifier;

(d)   creating at least one database record when copying said at least one file from said primary storage device to said secondary storage device, wherein said at least one database record contains tracking information about said at least one file and about said copying;

(e)   storing said at least one database record in said database; and

(f)   displaying said at least one database record, through a user interface for said existing file management software on a screen display in a graphics display device of said computer system, wherein said at least one database record is displayed graphically as a virtual file representing said at least one file.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) further comprises the steps of:

(c1)   creating a globally unique identifier (GUID);

(c2)   converting said GUID into a character string; and

(c3)   assigning said character string as said unique name for said removable storage medium.

3.   The method of claim 2 wherein step (c2) further comprises the step of:

(c2a)   converting said GUID into a character string by converting each hexadecimal digit of said GUID into a single character of said character string.

4.   A system for protecting, tracking, and retrieving data on a computer system, said system comprising:

a database, stored on a primary storage device of said computer system, wherein said database is

4   connected to an existing operating system of said computer system and connected to

5   existing file management software of said computer system;

6   a secondary storage device, connected to said computer system, for receiving a copy of at least one

7   file from said primary storage device for protection and retrieval thereof, wherein said

8   secondary storage device further comprises at least one removable storage medium,

9   mounted in said secondary storage device, for receiving said copy of said at least one file

10   from said primary storage device and further wherein each said at least one removable

11   storage medium has an unique identifier;

12   data protection software, operating within a memory of said computer system, wherein said data

13   protection software is connected to said existing file management software, connected to

14   said existing operating system, and connected to said database; and

15   wherein, at least one database record, comprised of tracking information about said at least one file

16   copied to said secondary storage device, is created and stored in said database, and further

17   wherein said at least one database record appears as a virtual file representing said at least

18   one file within a user interface of said existing file management software displayed in a

19   screen display of a graphics display device attached to said computer system.

1   5.   The system of claim 4 wherein said unique name for each said at least one removable

2   storage medium comprises a globally unique identifier. ·

1   6.   The system of claim 5 wherein said unique name further comprises a character for each

2   hexadecimal digit within said globally unique identifier.

1   7.   A computer system method for creating a unique name for a removable storage medium

2   comprising the steps of:

3   (a)   creating a globally unique identifier (GUID);

4   (b)   converting said GUID into a character string; and

5   (c)   assigning said character string as said unique name for said removable storage

6   medium.

1   8.   The method of claim 7 wherein step (b) further comprises the step of:

2   (b1)   converting said GUID into a character string by converting each hexadecimal digit

3   of said GUID into a single character of said character string.